

REMARKS

The application has been amended to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 are pending in the application.

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting over claims 1 and 13 of INOUE 6,905,408. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 3 of INOUE '408 are related to re-rotating the reel. These claims appear unrelated to forward and reverse rotation. Although the specification of INOUE '408 discloses forward and reverse rotation, nevertheless, the reel is rotated once by one or more pitch in the reverse direction. Even if one of ordinary skill in the art were to understand "re-rotating" to mean in a direction opposite to the initial direction of rotation, nevertheless, it would not have been obvious to repeatedly rotate the reels in the forward and reverse direction (more than once) and only within the recited range that the symbol is displayed. Thus, the present claims are believed not to be obvious in view of INOUE '408. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over INOUE 5,395,111 in view of DICKENSON et al. 5,251,898. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended to clarify that the controller controls the outer reel to stop after rotating in both a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly for each game and only within a range that a winning symbol remains displayed.

As recognized in the Official Action, INOUE fails to disclose that the same reel is rotated in both the forward and reverse directions. DICKENSON is offered for this feature with the Official Action concluding that it would have been obvious to modify INOUE in the manner suggested in order to increase player appeal.

However, the proposed combination of references does not disclose that which is recited.

The present claims not only require forward and reverse rotation, but also that such forward and reverse rotation is within the same game and only within a range that the first symbol is displayed.

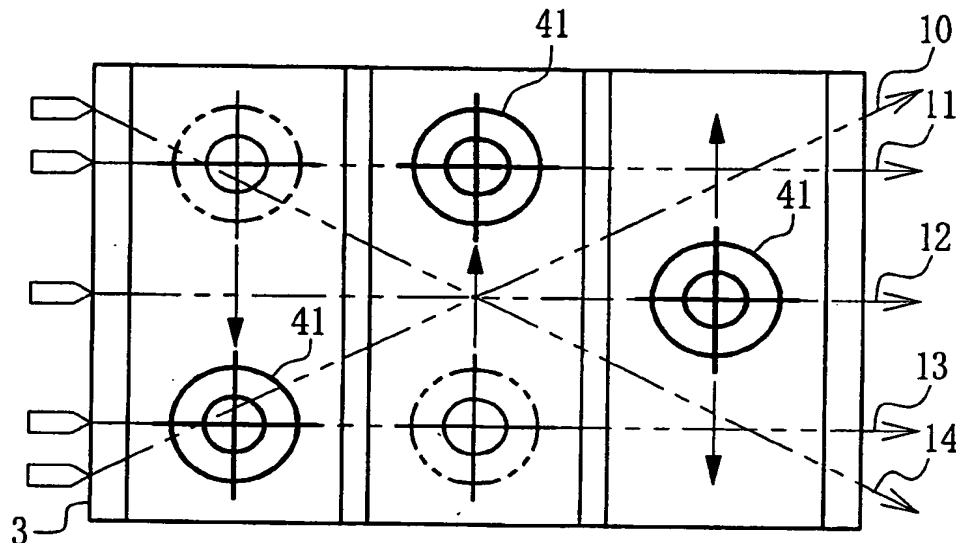
In contrast, DICKENSON discloses a direction in which each of the reels is rotated for each pull of the handle (each game). Thus, in one game the direction may be forward, while in the next game, the direction may be reversed. See column 3, lines 40-50 of DICKENSON.

DICKENSON discloses rotation in either a clockwise or a counterclockwise direction for each game. DICKENSON fails to disclose or suggest both clockwise and counterclockwise rotation in the same game.

Moreover, DICKENSON fails to disclose or suggest that rotation in the normal direction and a reverse direction is repeated only within a range that the first symbol is displayed in the display window.

See for example, Figure 10 of the present application, reproduced below, wherein the symbol 41 is only rotated within the display window and thus, only travels through a rotational distance indicate by the arrows.

FIG. 10



Independent claim 11 is similarly amended and the analysis above regarding claim 1 is equally applicable to claim 11.

Independent claim 14 is similarly amended and is written in 35 USC §112, sixth paragraph means-plus-function format and requires that the applied prior art discloses the same

structural or an equivalent structure that performs the exact recited function of controlling rotation of either the inner (or outer) reel to rotate in both a normal and a reverse direction repeatedly for each game and within a range that the symbol is displayed as disclosed on page 12, lines 18-29.

The analysis above regarding claim 1 is equally applicable to claim 14.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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